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ABSTRACT

This guide has been prepared to illustrate the development and implementation of a program offering comprehensive employment and training services for young parents. The guide is based on the experiences of the Parent Employment Program of 735, Inc., which was launched as a demonstration project with funds from the Massachusetts Governor's Youth Grant and the Medford Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) Consortium. The guide is designed for CETA Youth Coordinators and program administrators and provides background information necessary for deciding on program strategy. Topics covered include the following: identifying and assessing the need, program design and structure, critical issues, results and outcomes, client profiles, and strategies for getting started. Other programs in several locations and other states also are profiled. Appendixes to the guide provide job descriptions for Parent Employment Program personnel and a bibliography. (KC)

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"HOW WILL I SUPPORT MY BABY?":

ADMINISTRATOR'S GUIDE TO

VOCATIONAL PROGRAMMING FOR ADOLESCENT PARENTS

A Report on the Design and Implementation
of the Parent Employment Program of 735, INC.
An SETC Demonstration Project

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to thank our many strong supporters over the past year for all they have given to us and to the program. It always seems to be the intangible spirit of committed people that breathes life into service delivery and makes it happen.

The Parent Employment Program runs on the energy, creativity, and caring of its staff. Pam McRae, Vocational Counselor, and Lynne Wiley and Steve Rafuse, Peer Coordinators, built a program from scratch and gave their insight and support to participants in ways to numerous to mention.

Peggy Simon and Jodi Pompa, parenting workshop instructors, made childrearing and family life the positive experience it should be.

GED instructors Mark Greenberg, Pat Beu, and Jim McGarry, at 735, INC.'s Youth Employment Program, provided consistent educational support to participants. Job developers Lou Adam and Jane Heywosz plunged into finding good post-program training and employment opportunities for participants. The Outpatient clinical staff of 735, INC. gave ongoing personal support to participants and supervision for staff.

Staff from American Mutual Insurance Company, Crittenton Hastings House, Help for Children, Lawrence Regional Welfare Office, Massachusetts Consumer Council, Melrose/Wakefield Red Cross, Norfolk County Family Service Unit, North Shore Council on Alcoholism, 735, INC. Prevention Program, and the Wakefield Police Department gave of their time to make our life management skills workshop successful.

Marie Hetu and the entire YEP staff gave us their expertise, their time, and their moral support. The YEP Advisory Board provided valuable input and community contacts.

Our special thanks go to Frank Mitchell, Executive Director of 735, INC., the community of youth-serving professionals at 735, INC., and the Board of Directors of 735, INC., who believed from the outset in our ability to meet a critical youth need.

At the Department of Manpower Development/Program and Systems Development Division, Sally Patton and Jack Connley encouraged us, visited us, responded to our questions, gave us guidance, calmed our fears, and cut red tape. Without their involvement, none of this would have been possible.

At the Medford CETA Consortium, Gloria Williams, Executive Director, and Connie Karpinski, Youth Director, facilitated all the necessary fiscal and administrative procedures, gave us good, helpful feedback, and threw their support behind the program's continuation.

Prime Sponsor and Subgrantee youth coordinators and CBO administrators from all over the state responded patiently and knowledgeably to our questions about their experiences in serving young parents. Their input shaped the design of this guide.

Most importantly, the PEP participants themselves deserve our deepest gratitude for helping us improve the program month-by-month, for sticking with it, for sharing their personal thoughts, for offering bold and constructive criticism, and for letting us know that they believed in the value of our efforts.

Finally, and very specially, we thank Edie Carbonello, who knows even more than we do how much of her talents and hard work and thought have gone into this guide's development and production.

FOREWORD

This guide has been prepared to illustrate the development and implementation of a program offering comprehensive employment and training services for young parents.

The Parent Employment Program of 735, Inc. was launched as a demonstration project with funds from the Governor's Youth Grant (SETC) and the Medford CETA Consortium.

It is designed for CETA Youth Coordinators, and Program Administrators and provides background information necessary for deciding on program strategy.

Topics covered include:

- identifying and assessing the need
- program design and structure
- critical issues
- results and outcomes
- client profiles
- strategies for getting started.

The staff of the Parent Employment Program and New Environments for Women responsible for this document hope we have captured some of the success and enthusiasm in developing a program to work with this population.

The realities of preparing young parents for work, and the logistics of running a program for high risk youth will

be obvious in reading the report.

However, a growing number of programs (see Chapter Seven) and our own experience indicate that the provision of employment training services as part of a comprehensive program for young parents is a valid and worthwhile response.

We are committed to working with others interested in this area and view the manual as an outreach and referral effort. We welcome your comments.

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Personal Statement

Edie M. Carbonello

I was 21 years old, a single mother and living at home with my parents. When I first read about the PEP program in my local newspaper, I thought this program would: 1) supply me with an apartment of my own; 2) furnish it for me; 3) let me continue collecting welfare while this program gave me additional funds to live on and supported my way through school; 4) pay the rent and the other bills that go along with the apartment; and 5) find and pay for good quality childcare. I thought this program was there to solve all my problems. I thought perhaps it was a handout for unfortunate kids like me with children.

I called the telephone number and was told this program was for young parents who wanted to work. I said I didn't want to work, "thank you anyway." A few days later I called the number again and asked if they found the childcare for me and paid for it. I was told they would help me to find the childcare, but did not supply it. I was also told that they did not pay for the childcare, but Welfare would. I still was not interested in working.

I thought a lot about working. On the one hand, I wanted to stay home with my daughter. She was only a baby, and I felt children need their mothers home with them. On the other hand, that would mean I would always have to do without for myself and my daughter. I would always be worrying

about money. I would let my life pass by me without even trying to improve it. I knew I didn't want to stay living with my parents, and I couldn't afford my own apartment. How was I going to pay the bills? The only way to clear up these conflicting thoughts was to ask other parents for their opinions. Their opinions, of course, were negative. A couple had husbands who made a decent week's pay, and, therefore, were able to stay home with their children. Others were on welfare and seemed quite content to be struggling along, not being able to pay the bills. They all agreed that I belonged home with my baby. My baby would call the baby-sitter "mommy" and wouldn't know that I was her mother. I would miss finding her first tooth, miss seeing her first step, miss hearing her first word. She would develop according to the way my baby-sitter "brought her up." We would always be in a conflict because the baby-sitter would let her get away with what I would not, and she would resent me for it. She would think I was just there to take her away from her "home" every night.

These thoughts gnawed away at me every day. I knew I had to do something. I first decided that I would work only part-time. Then I realized that if I wanted my independence, to be able to make it on my own in the world, have my own apartment--my own home, just my daughter and I--then I would not be able to work part time. I could not support a household on just welfare and a part-time job. I realized I did not have a choice: I had to work full-time.

Once again, I made the call and asked how I could get in the program. From the time I made that call, until this very moment, things have been hard, and I don't see them getting any easier for a while. I did not have a babysitter or any means of transportation. I had to find someone to take care of the baby while I commuted back and forth for a few days to Wakefield and filled out applications, went in for Orientation, etc. I got a babysitter, and then I started the program.

A couple of months after I started the program, I moved out of my parents' house and into my own apartment. That's when things started getting even harder. I found myself out of the house 12 hours a day just because I was working. I still didn't have extra money; everything went to paying bills. It was a real effort to get up in the morning and go to work. I had to rush out with the baby in the morning, come home exhausted and clean the house and, of course, take care of the baby. There was no time for myself, and I was lonely. There was no hope for things getting any better. The baby used to cry when I took her home at night, and I began to realize what my friends said was true. I felt like everything was closing in on me. But the group (my peers) at PEP gave my morale a boost. We were all going through the same thing, and it felt good to be able to talk to someone who understood what I was going through. My other friends did not have kids so they couldn't understand what I was feeling. My friends that did have kids only

said, "I told you so." I missed her first step, and I missed a lot of other things. But I've learned to accept things the way they are.

The career planning workshop helped me to get a start, and a very definite step in the right direction. Even though I am not sure of what I want as a career, I do know that I want to continue with my education. Currently, I am taking basic courses at Bunker Hill Community College. I am getting vocational counseling from PEP to help me decide what to continue with in terms of a career. I have plans and future goals, which is more than I had before I started the program.

I think the survival skills workshop was enlightening not only to myself, but to the whole group. As consumers in the world, we were very ignorant about the rights we're entitled to. We learned many things, such as: consumer, welfare, protection, housing rights, etc. It taught us the importance of health, nutrition, maintaining a budget, resources, contact people, and many other things that we were totally unaware of. I think this workshop was the most helpful.

The parenting workshop helped us understand the "whys" of everything, which made situations, not only with our kids, but with our parents, more tolerable. It helped us learn to spend more <u>quality</u> time with our kids. Each and

every one of us felt guilty leaving the kids. We learned that this feeling is not only common, but normal. We also learned to understand these feelings. We shared them with each other, and that helped us to realize that what we are doing is the best thing possible for our kids and for ourselves. We learned how to get the most out of the time we were able to spend with our kids. This workshop definitely helped us to understand our kids more and how to enjoy them.

A couple of weeks after Christmas I was placed on "On the Job Training." I was very fortunate to have a boss that was understanding and sympathetic. She understands that when the baby is sick I will lose time out of work. She also understands that I do get down sometimes because of the heavy responsibility. I know if this was a different kind of job with limited flexibility, it wouldn't last for me. It was because of the Parent Employment Program that I found this job. I am able to pick up the phone, or go over to see the staff at PEP and I have them backing me up 100% of the way. If I didn't have this, I couldn't continue working. It is too much of a load to carry alone without support.

Chapter I

THE NEED FOR COMPREHENSIVE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES FOR YOUNG PARENTS

A. Does this population exist in significant numbers?

Young parents, as a group, are perhaps one of the least visible target populations for employment and training services. Although young, they carry adult-level responsibilities and are thus much less likely to be attracted to traditional youth employment programs. On the other hand, as young people, they have limited access to traditional employment networks for adults.

The research base on the employment status and needs of young parents is slim. CETA statistics do not separate out this population. Our brief phone survey of CETA administrators indicated that most saw this population as small in their areas and recalled only a few instances of teenage parenthood in their programs. In a few cases, however, administrators (often those with direct counseling experience in other social service settings) described the dimensions of the population as " serious", "growing", and "needing our attention."

Some indication of the economic status of young parents is discernible in Department of Public Welfare and

other poverty statistics. In the 1975 AFDC Characteristics Study, [1] approximately 1 out of 20 AFDC mothers was between the ages of 10 and 19, and 1 out of 5 was between the ages of 20 and 24. The former figure does not account for teen parents living at home and receiving benefits through their mothers. Thus, in 1975, 24.8% of all AFDC mothers were 24 years old or less. [2]

In a Department of Public Welfare Census Paper on new AFDC case openings in August 1977, the typical new recipient was a 20 year old woman with 1 child or pregnant with her first child. The statistically "average" new recipient was 22 years old with 2 children and an 11th grade education.

In two related studies, the poverty status of young parents was mentioned. A U.S. Department of Labor report in 1978 (Income Inequality and Employment) indicated

1. See Bibliography, Appendix B, for full citations.
2. This figure was corroborated impressionistically by welfare case workers, although local offices do not maintain separate counts.

that the younger the head of household in an AFDC family, the smaller its chances of moving out of poverty.

A February 1979 Massachusetts Department of Manpower Development paper on "Policy Issues in Targeting CETA Resources to Mass. Residents" found that 5.2% of all families in Massachusetts are headed by teens and young adults (16-24), yet fully 33% of all poor and near-poor families are headed by young parents.

The most complete research base on young parents comes from the medical and public health field, where increasingly vigorous attention has been paid over the past five years to the incidence of teen pregnancy and correlated health and social welfare problems.

One out of every five births in the U.S. is now to a teenager. In Massachusetts, births to women under 15 increased 40% in 6 years. Most teenage mothers now elect to keep their babies, and one 10-year study indicated that 60% of young women who give birth to their first child before they are 16 are pregnant again at 18.

The Planned Parenthood Federation of America calls the problem of teenage pregnancy a "national epidemic." Their studies indicate that 8 out of 10 young women giving birth between the ages of 15-17 never complete

high school. Additionally, 90% of these teen mothers are unemployed and 72% are on welfare. Although 45% do marry, the survival rate for these marriages is extremely low. Other studies have correlated teen parenthood with high incidences of child and spouse abuse, child neglect, alcoholism, malnutrition, and infant mortality and developmental disabilities. A large number of pre- and post- natal programs for school-age and other young mothers are in place across the nation in response to this research. Our own survey of these programs, however, indicates that a mere handful are prepared to handle any vocational issues.

The data on the following page from several Massachusetts cities and one subgrantee area was obtained from the Massachusetts Department of Vital Statistics 1978 Birth Records. Hospital phone checks indicate that 1980 birth figures for women 24 and under are even higher.

These patterns and statistics can be viewed in light of known youth unemployment patterns in general and still-limited work options and wage levels of women workers. The weight of this evidence, sketchy though it is in specific labor force terms, leads us to conclude the following:

1) there are large numbers of young parents in Massachusetts communities;

CITY/AREA	TOTAL BIRTHS	% of births to women 19 and under	% of births to women 24 and under
Medford CETA Consortium (12 - Towns)	3,992	5.5%	34%
Worcester	2,089	17.57%	54.57%
Springfield	2,291	22.48%	58.10%
New Bedford	1,412	16.93%	58.43%
Lowell	1,564	18.67%	60.23%
Cambridge	926	7.02%	31.32%
Boston	7,102	16.84%	49.00%
TOTALS	19,376	15.14%	48.33%

Mass. Dept. of Vital Statistics

1978

2) a variety of factors make unemployment, under-employment, poverty, and welfare dependency a high probability among these young families;

3) young parenthood strongly compounds the problems already facing unemployed youth;

4) the "problem" is growing annually rather than going away; and

5) the visibility of this population for employment and training service deliverers has been limited in the past.

Although CETA service providers may not have confronted this population face-to-face yet, its existence and its impact on community economic well-being cannot easily be overlooked. Most local health and welfare agencies (CHINS, WIC, Family Planning Councils, hospitals, nursing associations) see this population regularly to provide non-employment-related services.

B. What barriers to employability do young parents face?

In many respects, young parents present an ideal group to receive employment and training services. Their parenting responsibilities promote a level of commitment and stability frequently not seen in their peers who do not have children. Their youth gives them a resilience and capacity for rapid learning often not evident in older adults.

At the same time, young parents face a complex set

of barriers to successful employment which are meshed tightly together. It is our conviction, after a year's experience working with young parents, that these barriers must be dealt with as part of a whole, not as isolated factors.

First and foremost, young parents (most of whom are female single heads of household) are asked to juggle two demanding roles - parent and worker. One needs only to glance at current popular magazines, TV, and movies to know that this juggling act is stretching the psychological resources of millions of middle-class American adults right now, particularly in single-parent families. Many of the obstacles facing young CETA-eligible parents can be traced directly to the stress of these dual roles unalleviated by income, family and community supports, avenues of mobility, and personal wherewithal accessed by middle-class families.

A successful program for young parents must be able to provide tenable solutions to the problem of working and raising a family at the same time.

The problems facing young parents are thus very similar to those facing any working parent, especially a working

single parent:

- how to find enough time and energy to be a good employee and a good parent;
- how to find time for yourself - for further education, recreation, etc.;
- how to deal with the problem of reliable, good quality child care;
- how to handle the innumerable crises of parenting (e.g. illnesses) and not lose your job or sanity;
- how to manage the stress of the juggling act so you don't take it out on yourself, your kids, or your employer.

On another level, young parents face a unique set of problems because they are young and parents:

- they are often not prepared skillwise or emotionally to handle adult parenting responsibilities;
- they are still "growing up" themselves;
- they have lost their old peer networks and haven't formed new ones;
- they are struggling to develop mature marriage or spouse-type relationships at an age where this is difficult, at best;
- they are still regarded as "youths" by their parents, service deliverers, and employers;
- they lack the exposure, competency, education, and work experience of all young people;
- their financial responsibilities as parents frequently outstrip their short-term earning capacity.

The younger the young parent, the more severe these problems appear to be.

CETA-eligible young parents also face problems of poverty--undereducation, unstable family situations, medical/nutritional problems, legal problems, struggles to locate adequate housing, and frustration with bureaucratic service systems.

Finally, since most young people with primary childrearing responsibilities are female, the population faces all the well-documented difficulties of women achieving employment success - from early socialization, to occupational stereotyping, to inadequate background for career decision-making, to lower wages for "women's work", to overt discrimination. Since only a small proportion of the female labor force earns over $12,000/yr., the odds against a young unskilled single woman supporting children on her own are overwhelming.

C. What are the reasons not to provide intensive employment and training services to young parents?

Certainly, this population presents a significant challenge to employment and training service deliverers. We feel

it is important to recognize the legitimate objections which can be raised to addressing the needs and barriers outlined.

1) First, a program for young parents demands the extension of the CETA concept into realms often seen as "none of our business." Our experience has reinforced for us, many times over, that young parents cannot succeed at work or in training if they are not succeeding as parents. This means a different kind of "additional support services" and potentially higher initial costs.

2) The population is without question a higher-risk group than others who can be served. Therefore, they demand more skilled personnel and a more vigorous, tightly designed service model. A good outcome rate can be achieved, but not without some sophisticated strategies being brought to bear. These strategies must be a synthesis of the best in both adult and youth programming.

3) Any program for young parents must assume the burden of continuous headaches about childcare: who will provide it, who will pay for it, what happens when it collapses, etc.

4) A program's responsibilities cannot end definitively with placement, because young parents need follow-up supports to stabilize full-time employment, and employers need to be educated about the continuing family problems faced by young parents.

D. <u>What are the reasons for providing comprehensive E & T services to this population?</u>

In this population grow the roots of long-term structural unemployment and sporadic, if not permanent, welfare dependence. Beyond the labor force issues, the young parent-headed family without economic security and stability, poses an ongoing problem to the community

in terms of other human costs--abuse, alcoholism, malnutrition, mental illness, and a whole new generation of children growing up "at risk."

Intervention at this point, while perhaps more difficult, can break a cycle whose outcome is otherwise all too predictable.

For overall services planning purposes, too, we feel that programs for young parents extend staff and program knowledge and capabilities into areas which will, of necessity, face CETA in the future: welfare reform and services to welfare mothers, daycare, the integration of family and worklife, and methods to break mutually reinforcing cycles of family/community/social welfare problems and structural unemployment.

E. What do staff and participants think about the value of this kind of program?

Our evaluation at the end of the PEP demonstration year included sessions with both staff and participants on the pros and cons of this type of program. Naturally, they're biased! But this analysis of the program's value is also based in a solid year's effort on the part of the staff to shape a responsive program design and on the part of participants to overcome obstacles and succeed. We'd like to share the results with you.

Participants were asked "If you were to recommend the program to your friends, what would you say?"

- it will help you make decisions
- you'll get new ideas
- you'll understand your kids
- they won't take welfare away
- you'll get to know yourself
- you'll find out you're not the only one.

"How did the program make a difference for you?"

- socially: I didn't have any friends with kids
- got my diploma
- I can live by myself and survive
- I got help to find help for myself
- made me want to be an advocate for me and my son
- made me realize how important I am to my child and society
- I got closer to my child.

"What would you be doing if you weren't in PEP?"

- doing housework and watching the soaps
- being depressed
- collecting welfare
- looking for a rich man
- making money illegally.

"Why should there be a program just for young parents?"

- I don't want to be around non-parents; they don't understand
- the support is important
- you can see there's something out there for you
- we feel older; I wouldn't go to a "youth" program
- other people look down on us or else think it's great to have kids
- we have a whole different way of life
- we have to learn how to work and act as "both parents"

We asked the staff "What do you see as the specific value of a program like PEP?

- a group support
- time and resources to deal with the unique problems of being a working parent
- participants are treated as "normal" and not as "deviates" or "isolates"; validates parenting as an important part of life
- more efficient way to deal with the issues than hit-or-miss in other programs
- offers clear alternative to welfare dependency
- participants share resources and information with each other
- other problems can be identified more easily because parenting concerns are dealt with regularly
- prevents child abuse, mental health problems, medical problems, further unwanted pregnancies
- sensitizes employers and community agencies to the needs of young parents.

Chapter II

PROGRAM STRUCTURE AND DESIGN

This section is designed to provide an overview of the program's basic concepts and components. The time frame in which the Parent Employment Program operates for each group is:

4 weeks (approx.)	-	Outreach
3 weeks	-	Open Houses (1 week)
1 week	-	Orientation
12 weeks	-	PEP Workshops
3-6 months	-	(overlapping with workshops) Work Experience
3 Months +	-	Private placement, Individual Referral, Skills Training, or OJT (all participants receive follow-up services)

A. Staffing

PEP has the following staff positions:

- Program Director
- Vocational Counselor/Services Coordinator
- Vocational Counselor/Workshop and Group Coordinator
- Adult Basic Education Instructor

Complete job descriptions for these positions can be seen in Attachment A. The program also hired a Child Development/Family Life specialist on a part-time basis as a workshop instructor.

B. Program Activities

1. Outreach

A minimum of four to eight weeks was found to be desirable for recruiting potential applicants from a broad-range of youth and adult referral sources: CETA files; local junior and senior high schools; family planning programs; hospitals; local welfare offices; day care centers; Office for Children. Individuals were informed by dissemination of brochures and posters (in neighborhood centers, supermarkets, shopping centers, etc.), public service announcements, and newspaper articles and advertisements. We found "want-ad" - type ads to be the most effective outreach strategy.

2. Intake/Open House/Interviews

Approximately three Open Houses were scheduled prior to Orientation over a three-week period. Interested applicants attended these informal information-gathering sessions where they are exposed to program structure, goals, and expectations; meet and establish rapport with staff; gain some initial comfort with the group-based nature of the program; and meet other potential participants. These sessions provide the staff with valuable information about individuals' genuine interest in such a program and readiness to participate.

3. Orientation Week

The purpose of Orientation Week is to provide a solid base of understanding about the program and to foster the development of a sense of group identity. Information about each program component is presented by staff and workshop leaders. Educational testing and assessment is conducted by the ABE Instructor. Staff also provide assistance with day-care arrangements, and help participants select and interview for Work Experience jobs. Participants are paid for this week. Culminating these five days of Orientation activities, staff and participants develop a mutually-agreed-upon "learning contract" for the duration of the program, emphasizing a strong commitment to self-responsibility.

4. Program Implementation

Clients move through the first 12 weeks balancing their part-time (16-20 hrs. weekly) Work-Experience jobs with attendance at regularly scheduled workshop activities, preparing for meeting educational goals, attending counseling sessions, and formal and informal group discussions with other participants. Workshops are scheduled for Mondays and Tuesdays, and participants work at their jobs Wednesdays-Fridays. This schedule was chosen after some experimentation as the one best suited to minimizing transportation

and attention-span problems. Individual counseling, case management, and the Employability Development Plan provide the staff with a framework for helping participants to integrate and maximize the benefit of workshops and placement.

5. Follow-up

Participants are followed-up on a 30, 60, 90, and 180-day basis by vocational counselors. Unsubsidized placements, OJT, classroom training, individual referral, or a decision to remain at home or work part-time are possible outcomes. We have found that the latter choices will continue to be necessary for a small percentage of the population. As with the program itself, follow-up services offer a high degree of support to encourage and assist participants in becoming independent, self-supporting, and responsible adults as well as parents.

C. Component Descriptions

1. Counseling

Counseling must be a major on-going component of a program for participants who are dealing with a wide variety of transitional issues - from childhood to adulthood, from singleness to familyhood and from school to work. The staffing pattern

calls for two vocational counselors. A further distinction must be made between vocational counseling, individual counseling and group counseling.

a. Vocational Counseling

The goals of the vocational counseling component are to assess the individual's progress in the program including: Work Experience performance; GED progress; workshop participation and attendance; and personal issues as they relate to vocational employment status. In addition, counselors review EDP's on a bi-monthly basis and revise, if necessary. Vocational counseling also provides the opportunity for participants to reflect individually on information gained during the career planning workshop, thereby increasing participants' self-awareness and life/career decision-making skills.

b. Individual Counseling

Individual Counseling relates more to those complex personal issues facing young adults with family responsibilities. Though personal issues cannot be totally separated from vocational issues, we found it wise to provide access to more intensive therapeutic counseling services. In PEP's case, therapeutic services were available through the larger 735, Inc. agency. In other

situations, this can be handled on a formal referral basis. The ability to make referrals and have them accepted and followed through on by the client, is a process that demands skill and sensitivity. We also found that there are distinct advantages if one of the vocational counselors has some clinical experience, so discreet personal problem-solving can take place informally, since sometimes participants are leary of mental health professionals.

c. Parent Support Group (1 1/2 hrs/week)

The Parent Support Group is the primary vehicle for group counseling. In addition, the workshops described below include activities which fall under the rubric of "group counseling."

This personal support group provides participants an in-depth opportunity to form their own support network and informally discuss the many issues facing young parents. In particular, relationship issues with peers, parents, and grandparents, are discussed as well as personal growth, self-identity and sexual identity issues. Some of these personal issues could be dealt with in individual counseling, but we have found that supportive, sensitive group sharing is a valuable program component. In

PEP, the support group is co-led by a vocational counselor and a clinical counselor from the 735 staff.

2. Work and You Workshop (WAY) (3 hours/week)

This weekly workshop is designed to give participants the tools to gather and use occupational information, resulting in the ability to make realistic career decisions. It is led by one of the vocational counselors. Other objectives include increased self-awareness (e.g. identification of strengths, weaknesses, skills, interests and values); career awareness (exposure to different occupational clusters); and economic and lifestyle awareness. The workshop also develops participants' decision-making skills and longer-term career planning strategies.

The 12-session workshop is designed to provide participants with an understanding of the economic necessities and the reality of the world of work, and a supportive structure for integrating the complex realities of parenting and working. Workshop techniques include individual and group exercises, discussion, field trips, inventories, and speaker presentations. Participants also bring to the workshop problems confronted in their Work Experience jobs. We have found that the workshop's content

sometimes stimulates participants to re-evaluate their current Work Experience jobs. Individual counseling may then result in a revision of the EDP, or a consultation with the work-site supervisor to alter or improve job responsibilities.

The challenge in offering the WAY workshop is to provide solid skill development in how to get and keep a job, to develop self-confidence in participants as workers, and to encourage realistic plans for the future. The workshop must also address the day-to-day realities faced by participants: getting children to day-care; getting to work on time; making arrangements for sick children; interpersonal relations with supervisors, and the entry-level nature of the Work Experience jobs.

3. Your Child, Your Parents and You Workshop (CPY)
(3 hours/week)

This workshop is designed specifically to develop participants' competencies in handling family responsibilities and relationships. Given the specialized nature of this component we have found it important to have a child development/family life specialist hired on a part-time contractual basis. In addition to preparing and conducting the workshop, this person attended weekly staff meetings, developed library resources, and shared information with staff about issues raised by

participants in class.

In order for the vocational development objectives of the program to be met, it is essential that participants develop confidence in their ability to deal with family issues. The workshop is designed to provide sequenced information on child growth and development, and universal parenting issues. In addition, open-ended problem-solving discussions centered on the actual family vs. work and child-rearing experiences of participants are included. As participants progress through this workshop, they develop a more objective awareness of parenting activities linked to various stages of child development, as well as concrete, group-supported ideas for managing family vs. work dilemmas.

One of the first issues to be addressed by the workshop instructor was childcare: how to choose day-care services or other arrangements, and how to deal with the expectations and ambivalence about leaving children. Increased knowledge of child development needs provides participants with information to make informed choices about immediate and long-range work and career plans. Their involvement over the twelve week period in a full time program gives them ample opportunity, with a maximum of support, to realistically assess the impact of work on their family situations.

4. Home, Community, Life and Life Skills Workshop (HCLL)
(3 hours/week)

This workshop is designed to provide participants with information about a variety of issues they must face in their daily lives. Given the diversity of these life-skills issues, one vocational counselor coordinated this activity. Preparation involved contacting community resource people to make approximately one and one-half hour presentations on particular topic areas.

The HCLL component was organized in three sequential categories of topics, which allowed quite a degree of flexibility in securing specific speakers. This approach also allowed participants to determine some of their own interest areas. These three categories were: 1) Crisis Information and Resources; 2) Survival and Stabilization Resources; and 3) Future Growth Information and Resources. Pre' and post-tests were developed to assess how well information was relayed. Question and answer periods during presentations, as well as pre-session preparation and post-session evaluation discussions led by the coordinating counselor, allowed participants to integrate this information with their own personal needs.

Typical agenda topics included:

Crisis: Domestic Violence; Personal Safety and Protection (Rape); Alcohol/Drug Abuse Information

Survival and Stabilization Information:

Family Planning/Health Education; Welfare Rights and Responsibilities; Housing; Nutrition; Children's Services; Home Safety and First Aid.

Future Growth Information/Resources:

Consumer Protection; Insurance; Finances/ Budgeting.

5. Participant/Staff Business Meeting (1 hour/week)

One day per week, participants and staff plan lunch together at the program site to discuss and evaluate how the program is meeting everyone's day-to-day needs. This type of dialogue helps create a feeling of ownership for participants that results in their taking more and more responsibiliity for seeing that the program works for them as individuals.

6. Work Experiences and Job Development/Placement

Participants' first contact with job-seeking and job development really begins with the Work Experience component. It is designed to provide participants with an opportunity to meet specific job requirements, develop a positive working relationship with a supervisor, and solidify good work habits, such as responsibility, punctuality, flexibility, and so forth. The nature of available Work Experience jobs has a major bearing on participants introduction to the world of work. We have concentrated on

the development of a bank of interesting, challenging jobs in a variety of occupational clusters to enhance the strength of this program component.

For post-Work Experience planning, vocational counselors provide direction and assistance in tracking down occupational leads, making contact with potential employers and keeping up to date with job market changes. We focussed on entry-level positions with clear opportunities for advancement. We also paid particular attention to the orientation employers received regarding the special needs of these working parents. For instance, we encourage employers to consider flexible working hours as offering distinct advantages to the young parent. Information presented through the WAY workshop helps participants develop career goals, based on accurate labor market information and self-assessment exercises. As career goals are clarified, participants along with the counselors determine the most suitable course of action, revising the EDP as needed, to include options leading to unsubsidized employment, On the Job Training, classroom training or to other appropriate training options via individual referral. While the program offers a high degree of support, it also stresses a high degree of participants personal responsibility for becoming independent, self-supporting, and responsible

workers as well as parents.

7. Individual Development Monitoring

In any targeted program it is especially important for staff to pay close attention to the individual as s/he progresses through various components. The PEP program components are designed to address the complexity of needs and issues facing the target population in a coherent way. The intensity of these issues for participants calls for a sophisticated monitoring process to manage individual development.

The program uses a structured vocational case management system where staff meet weekly to review EDP's, staff contacts with participants during the previous week, workshop results, and progress/problems. This process results in specific recommended courses of action. This system incorporates vocational, personal, and parenting goals.

On occasion, staff recommend a "team meeting", where a participant with attendance or other problems meets with the entire staff to develop a contract for continued participation in the program.

This kind of consistent monitoring helped staff to anticipate problems before they got worse and to approach the participant as a whole individual.

We attribute our retention rate in large part to this monitoring system.

CHAPTER III

CLIENT PROFILES

The following profiles are anonymous descriptions of young parents who exemplify participants in this type of program. The decision to profile this population in the following manner is an attempt to "bring-to-life" the issues, barriers, and strategies involved in serving young parents.

A. Linda

Linda was 17 years old and single when she came into the program, had a seven month old son, and lived at home with her parents. She had a tenth grade education and the results of the TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) indicated that her grade level was substantially lower.

The problems seen at entry with Linda were primarily immature attitudes about life goals, basic life skills and responsibilities, both for herself and her child. Linda did not have child care arranged for her child and was very resistant to exploring "outside" (i.e. licensed providers) day care, and preferred to make arrangements with friends and relatives. She also talked about numerous problems with her family.

Linda was initially placed in a clerical work experience site, while attending PEP workshops and G.E.D. preparation classes. Due to poorly planned childcare as well as

a poorly structured work site, Linda's attendance became a problem. At the same time, her vocational counselor became aware of Linda's potential neglect of her son. As a result of the on-going case-management at PEP, a plan was developed for Linda's counselor to confront her, regarding the inappropriate care of her baby. She was given the choice of either "self-reporting" to the Department of Welfare and requesting assistance, or accepting that the program would report her by filing a "51a" * with DPW.

Linda chose to "self-report" and her counselor from PEP went to the Welfare office with her and asked for help. As a result, a pediatric nurse was assigned to Linda's house one afternoon each week to assist with nutrition and proper care of the baby. At the same time, Linda's work experience placement was changed to a day care center. Linda and her baby thrived under this arrangement. Linda completed her GED requirements after four months in the program and was eventually placed in an OJT in a clerical setting.

Also, during Linda's involvement with the program, she secured day care with a licensed home provider and moved out of her parent's home to share an apartment with another program participant and her two children.

* Child abuse/neglect complaint procedure which all service providers and professionals are mandated to pursue if there is suspicion of abuse/neglect.

B. John and Mary

John and Mary were 16 years old, married and had a 6-month old baby when they entered the program. The initial program design included the option of serving young couples together.

John and Mary were both high school dropouts (John - 9th grade and Mary - 10th grade). They were living with John's family.

John was placed in work experience as a mechanic's aide and Mary was placed as an administrative assistant in a local service agency. They were both attending GED classes, but at different levels. John scored very low in academic ability and Mary scored extremely high.

They were attending the PEP workshops together, although as the only male in the program, John had attendance/ motivation problems.

As they progressed in the program, their very unstable marital relationship became more and more of a program issue. Their domestic problems became general information among the other program participants. Couples and/or individual counseling was recommended many times by their respective counselors, but was always refused.

John was eventually hired on an OJT contract as a mechanic with a private employer. He and Mary separated and

he maintained custody of the baby.

Mary's attendance at her work experience site became increasingly poor. She was frustrated with not having a creative, "wonderful" job and not having her high school diploma. It was difficult to get her to slow down and formulate a plan for what she wanted to achieve. She left the program because she felt she could do better on her own. Follow-up contacts have shown that Mary has had several different jobs in less than three months working on average 3-7 days at each.

Neither John nor Mary completed GED preparation.

The result of our experience with John and Mary was a decision to no longer accept married couples into the program during the same cycle. We had seen that it negatively impacts on the total group process and identity as well as fueling inappropriate competition within the couple.

C. Susan

Susan was 21 years old, recently separated from her husband and raising two children (daughter, 2 and $^1/_2$; son, 1 and $^1/_2$) when she entered the program. She had a minimal job history and had left high school in the 11th grade. Her envisioned career goal upon entry was nursing. She had no idea how to obtain child care and

was uncertain emotionally about leaving her children with a "stranger."

Susan was placed on work experience at a local family planning clinic where her job description included medical assisting as well as medical record keeping. Susan was involved in PEP workshops and GED preparation.

After some failures and inconsistencies with arranging day care for her children, Susan researched, interviewed and made arrangements with a local day care center for her children.

She Achieved her GED in three months. Susan investigated a variety of training opportunities for a nursing career. Her final decision was that she felt unable to make the time and energy commitment necessary to attend nursing school while her children were so young. This decision was not an easy one for Susan. She spent many hours with her counselor exploring all her viable options.

Susan was privately placed as a nurses' aide (part-time) in a nursing home. Her plans at this time are to enroll in nursing school after a year of working.

CHAPTER IV

CRITICAL ISSUES

This section highlights what we discovered to be some of the most important employment and training service issues in working with young parents.

Some of these issues are similar to those faced in serving other disadvantaged populations; others are unique to young parents. We do feel each must be addressed successfully by program design and strategies for young parents to achieve maximum employability.

Each sub-section briefly defines the issue and notes strategies employed to address it. Subsequent technical manuals will elaborate on these service strategies.

A. Participant Expectations

1. Issue

We found that participants enroll in the program full of hope and high expectations about embarking on this commitment.

The hidden danger is that participants frequently "put all their eggs in one basket", becoming discouraged and disillusioned after a while. In a group-based program, this mood is infectious, and can result

in a period of high absenteeism, lack of cooperation, and stalled progress.

2. Strategies

- what the program can and cannot do is addressed specifically in Open Houses and in a staff/participant contract negotiated during Orientation Week;
- workshops build in discussion "dream" vs. "reality";
- mid-cycle evaluations and regular program "business meetings" give participants a chance to air frustrations.

B. Child Care

1. Issue

The need for reliable, good quality child care which allows a young parent the freedom to develop consistent work habits and experience is a continuing source of anxiety for staff and participants alike. Like all parents, participants care deeply about their children, and become distracted and unreliable when they are worried about what's happening during the day. As is true for all working parents, child care is a jerry-rigged affair, with carefully-planned arrangements often collapsing overnight.

2. Strategies

- staff are prepared to deal with the issue on a continuing basis;

- participants are given support and referral to resources, but are expected to take responsibility for primary and back-up arrangements;
- parenting skills workshop includes sessions on selecting child care and dealing with parent/child feelings about separation;
- staff advocate with Welfare for services, and with employers for latitude around unavoidable child-related absences;
- as a last resort, staff care for a child at the program site for a few hours and/or provide emergency babysitting funds.

C. Welfare Disregard and Its Impact

1. Issue

As Title IV - eligible AFDC recipients, participants have their CETA earnings disregarded as income by the Welfare Department.

We have identified some emerging problems because of this disregard. Because most participants do not understand Welfare income formulas, they fear not being able to support themselves in unsubsidized jobs and seriously consider quitting work at that point.

The disregard may also foster a false sense of "wealth" which won't last.

In terms of the potential change to all or partial IIB/IID funding, we do see some benefit from having participant groups who are more committed to the

the program and less drawn in simply because of the money. Nevertheless, we expect our outreach effort will have to be much more vigorous to compensate for this change (see participant remarks in Chapter I on the appeal of the disregard).

2. Strategies

- a Welfare Dept. administrator presents income/grants formulas in the survival skills workshop (HCLL); at the very least, participants become aware that they will always make more money by working than by not working
- in the same workshop, other speakers deal with budgeting and consumer decisions;
- the career planning workshop addresses values about money, as well as occupational wage rates;
- individual counseling sessions focus on immediate and long-range financial planning, including what will happen at the end of the program.

D. Parenting/Family Life Stress

1. Issue

Most participants are experiencing considerable, ongoing stress managing parenthood under less-than-optimal conditions. The normal strains of rearing children are generally compounded by unresolved adolescent problems, financial crises, and poor relationships with their own families, and spouses/boyfriends. Maintaining a full-time work schedule and making career plans add a whole new burden. PEP staff found that employment goals are seldom achieved if participant family situations are not stabilized.

2. Strategies:

- parenting skills workshop combines instruction on child development with problem-solving activities designed around actual participant experiences;
- a clinical counselor from the larger agency 735, co-leads a weekly support group with the vocational counselor, and participants have ready access to individual therapy;
- active referrals and advocacy are done to immediately resolve crises such as child or spouse abuse, alcoholism, and housing emergencies;
- individual case management incorporates family life development goals for each participant.

E. Working Single Parenthood

1. Issue:

Most participants are single mothers and find it difficult to combine work and childrearing, physically as well as emotionally. They have very little support from their own networks for leaving their children to go to work. Even after they have made the decision to seek employment, they usually feel an ongoing sense of conflict about this decision. We found that the program had to both acknowledge these conflicts, and provide positive models of working single parenthood.

2. Strategies:

- the focus of the program itself provides considerable peer encouragement and reinforcement;
- the parenting skills workshop provides information geared toward single parenting and holds a panel discussion with past participants and others as "role models";

- the weekly support group addresses feelings of guilt, conflict, depression, as well as sources of positive reinforcement for working;
- the career planning workshop discusses how to manage work demands as the only responsible parent, when children's needs must come first.

F. Advocacy

1. Issue:

Frequently, participants have needs which are not well-served by existing agencies, because of red-tape, eligibility requirements, large caseloads, or simple lack of resources. Participants themselves are often ignorant of available services and impatient with structures and regulations.

We found it to be extremely important to maintain ongoing personal relationships with other service deliverers who could facilitate timely and appropriate responses to needs. Otherwise, participant frustrations inhibited employability development. At the same time, the program emphasized individual responsibility and skill-building around using resources.

Some of the resources where advocacy was important were: housing, medical needs, Welfare Dept. social services, legal aid, family planning, and childcare.

2. Strategies:

- counselors maintained an up-to-date resource

file and bulletin board, actively raised service issues in counseling, often made initial information inquiries, and followed up through the case management system;

- presentations about PEP were made to staffs of other agencies;
- the survival skills workshop brought in key response speakers over a 12-week period;
- participants were coached in skills for getting services and took responsibility for carrying out agreed-upon strategies.

G. Involvement in Personal Lives

1. Issue:

Often, employment and training programs avoid extensive involvement in the personal lives of participants. We found that PEP participants needed extra support and occasional firm intervention to get personal problems under control. Often this meant confronting participants in counseling on such issues as apparent child abuse/neglect, pregnancy, alcohol/drug abuse, and family relationships, and then following up on referrals to appropriate resources.

2. Strategies:

- the case management system incorporates attention to personal problem-solving and personal development goals;
- the staff maintains active contact with crisis services, including internal referral to the 735 Inc. clinical staff;
- the weekly support group helps participants articulate and better cope with problem-solving.

H. Affective Development

1. Issue:

Although participants are handling the adult responsibility of parenting, they are also still adolescents, experiencing the same difficult transitions to adulthood facing all adolescents: searching for autonomy; creating an independent lifestyle; anxiety feelings about the future; wanting to both rely on and fight structure and limits; testing out relationships with the opposite sex; developing self-discipline and decision-making; and distinguishing themselves from their parents. The program saw that all of these transitions represented development goals that had to be kept in mind in designing approaches.

2. Strategies:

- the peer support nature of the program allowed participants to be both "young" and "parents" simultaneously;
- case management incorporated attention to adolescent development issues;
- staff have ongoing supervision and support from association with the Youth Employment Program and the larger 735 Inc. agency.
- program structure incorporates most of the same developmental and behavioral parameters to be effective in the Youth Employment Program.

I. Peer Relationships

1. Issue:

As one participant put it, "I don't have anything

in common with people my own age who don't have kids." Most young parents have become isolated from support networks and friendships and struggle with parenting all alone. All the professional input in the world cannot substitute for the reinforcement of working alongside others "in the same boat."

2. Strategies:

- the program had two PSE-funded youth coordinator positions filled by young parents and hopes to continue similar positions in the future;
- workshops are structured in such a way as to allow for peer give-and-take;
- past participants come back for panel discussions as "role models"; and
- the program builds in occasional recreational activities (e.g. a trip to the zoo) for participants and their children.

J. Realistic Career/Work Options

1. Issue:

Young parents seldom have the luxury of pursuing a traditional career development path of attending full-time school leading to full-time employment. Most, as young women, face choices around traditional vs. non-traditional work, with the added pressure of needing to support children. Many have high aspirations for themselves which have to be negotiated with current realities and shaped into long-term plans. Along with this go frustrations and resentments at the restrictions put on them by parenting responsibilities.

2. Strategies:

- the career planning workshop combines interest assessment and broad occupational exploration with strategies for building long-term career plans which combine entry-level work with further schooling;
- staff explore part-time work opportunities for participants whose family responsibilities require more attention, including arranging for part-time OJT's; and
- participants are specifically introduced to non-traditional options through speakers and field trips.

K. Facilities

A group-based program for young parents which emphasizes peer support as well as structured workshops, has particular space and facilities requirements.

Instructors need a formal "business-like" workshop space with chairs and tables, blackboards and/or chart stands, and sufficient room for individual or small group work and the showing of films.

Participants need a comfortable lounge space for breaks which can also serve as a playroom when children are brought to the program. PEP purchased some children's furniture and toys to make this arrangement workable.

Counselors also need private space for individual sessions. Our arrangements this year for counseling space were not good, and we felt this hampered our effectiveness.

We also found we needed two phone lines, access to clerical support and xeroxing, space for resource files and a library that participants could use, and a place for staff to have confidential meetings while participants were on-site.

L. OJT and Private Placement Success Factors

1. Issue:

The transition from the support base of the program to an OJT or unsubsidized placement situation is not an easy one. Even though the program concentrates on developing good work habits and skills for managing work and parenting, participants find that staff have a genuine concern for the problems they face that is seldom evident in the "outside world." It is at this point that participants and employers need help in making new arrangements successful before problems accumulate and result in failures.

2. Strategies:

- preparation for anticipated changes to "real jobs" with participants in the career planning workshop;
- efforts toward building positive personal relationships between direct supervisors and participants (we found unequivocally that participants stuck it out when they "really liked" their supervisors and felt personal loyalty to them);
- advocacy with employers around the problems facing single parents in general and in particular

young parents;

- biweekly follow-up and optional evening support groups during OJT, and regular follow-up and counseling for 30 days following private placements;

- 60, 90, and 180 day follow-ups afterward.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS AND OUTCOMES

A. Attendance - Reports

Attendance percentages for the program participants have been recorded in three separate activities of the Program-Work Experience; GED classes; and Workshops.

1. Work Experience

The percentages of attendance in this activity for a total of 25 participants ranged from a low of 51% to a high of 97% attandance, averaging 77%.

In the lower ranges, this poor attendance resulted in either: 1) a formal contract between the participant, the program and the worksite supervisor outlining the conditions under which the participant would be allowed to continue on that worksite; or 2) termination from the worksite. The decision between these two alternatives involved many factors, but the primary goal was always the employability development of the participant.

Termination from a job site did not imply termination from the program. Generally, a participant continued to attend Program workshops and GED classes, while exploring the reasons for the termination with

his/her vocational counselor. After a couple of weeks a new work experience placement was secured for the participant.

2. GED Classes

Initially attendance at GED classes tended to be low. The reasons for this are similar to all the reasons participants dropped out of high school in the first place. The attendance percentages for this activity ranged from 40% to 85%, averaging 60%. Once participants became involved in the self-paced, somewhat informal and humanistic approach of the ABE/GED Instructors and curricula, attendance rates improved.

For those that continued to be resistant the following policy was developed: If classes are missed without sufficient reason and a prior call, the participant must give up the same amount of hours at the worksite (e.g. a participant who does not attend a scheduled class in the morning is not allowed to work that afternoon). The rationale for this is that a high school education is as important to a participant's employability as the other activities in the program.

3. PEP Workshops (HCLL, WAY and CPY)

Our experience to date has shown that attendance at workshops is consistently higher than in Work

Experience and GED. The range was from 60% to 97%, averaging 80%.

This high rate of attendance can be attributed to the supportive and high-interest quality of these activities. Most of the young parents were eager to know as much as possible about parenting, child development, basic life skills, and so forth.

The career workshop was the most difficult in terms of motivating participants.

This resistance seemed to stem from young parents not emotionally believing that they could think in terms of "careers." Helping participants realize that they can take control of their lives and there are viable, realistic goals they can set for themselves and attain, is a major objective of this workshop.

The PEP workshops are a crucial part of the design of the program. Difficulties with employability are usually related to a variety of complex problems associated with participants' quality-of-life. The workshops begin to address these needs.

B. Achievement of Development Goals

Many of the successes of PEP are of the type that do not lend themselves to a strict quantitative measurement.

The long term effects of the program will benefit not only individuals in the program, but also their children, their families, and the community at large. We see such qualitative outcomes as increased ability and knowledge in the following areas: self-esteem; parenting; community resources; child development; personal and home safety; housing; family planning; good nutrition; and career awareness.

Our case records indicate that all 25 participants made gains in these areas.

The high support of the PEP design during the first phase of the program should not be confused with "dependence." The goal is to create an atmosphere for young parents to learn the techniques and strategies of solid decision-making and self-management.

C. Employment and Training Outcomes

During the demonstration year, 25 young parents were enrolled in the program - one group of 13 and one group of 12. The outcomes, to date, are as follows:

OJT	9
IR	1
Private Placement	6
Terminated	3
Active	5
Other CETA Programs	1

The 9 OJT placements represent 36% of the total participants. Two of these participants terminated OJT prior to the contracted date. Both of these participants are currently working in non-OJT jobs.

The one participant who entered full-time school (IR) left before completing and is currently "Holding for Activity" while she decides on the next step.

Of the 3 terminations, 2 were negative and 1 was positive. The positive termination represents one young mother's decision, supported by the PEP staff, to stay at home with her 2 children at this time. The negative termination rate for the program is 8%.

Of the 5 active participants, 3 are undecided about future goals, 1 will be entering college full-time in the fall and 1 is awaiting OJT.

The 6 private placements are in a variety of jobs - i.e. nurses aide, day care aide, clerical, sales work.

One participant was transferred to CETA-PSE as a counselor trainee in an adolescent residential program. This will become an OJT when that agency's new fiscal year begins.

D. Follow-up

Follow-up has been designed into the program in the

following ways.

- Participants who have been placed on OJT or IR are contacted by vocational counselors on a minimum of a bi-weekly basis. Process notes are kept on this contact and bi-monthly a progress report is completed for each participant.

- Participants who choose private placement are followed closely during their first month on the job (weekly contact) and then contacted on a 60, 90, and 180 day basis.

- All participants who terminate from the Program (positive and negative) are contacted on a 30, 60, 90, and 180 day basis.

Follow-up has been designed to not only assess participants' current employment status, but also to determine if participants have additional needs where the program can be helpful: educational needs, advocacy, resource and referral, etc.

CHAPTER VI

STRATEGIES FOR GETTING STARTED

The preceding sections have identified the need and rationale for developing special vocational programs for young parents and the results of one year's programmatic response. Any new program venture will benefit from the experiences of those who have succeeded in the past. However, specific planning strategies will facilitate service deliverers' movement from program idea to program reality. The issues and strategies outlined here can help in getting started.

A. How to identify the need

Information on the numbers of young parents are not, at this time, included in local CETA statistics. The information in this manual (see Need section - Chapter I) can be fairly easily substantiated at the local level by a few well-targeted phone calls. Local hospitals, family and neighborhood health clinics will provide the numbers of live births to teens and the number of children receiving post-natal care. In both cases you can obtain the breakdown by parents' age (i.e. 19 and under, and 24 and under). Visiting Nurses Association, Family Planning Clinics and Planned Parenthood programs should have solid information on the need, and can also provide assistance in recruiting participants. Their knowledge of other community resources, child-care availability and internal consulting services can be

invaluable. Other local community resources worth checking with include Girl Scouts, Girls' Clubs, YWCA, Women's centers and Neighborhood Centers.

Another prime resource is the Department of Public Welfare, specifically the person in charge of child abuse and neglect. Individuals receive financial and other support thru AFDC and WIC (Women Infants and Children - a nutrition program). Contact with these agencies is important both as participant referral sources and as ongoing resources during program operation.

B. How to identify child care resources

Contact with the above agencies will more than likely provide leads on the availability of child care resources. No matter what exists, there rarely are sufficient services within a community. Especially limited are the number of Title XX slots for Welfare recipients. Other licensed facilities exist, usually with fairly extensive waiting lists. These licensed facilities are run independently by various social service organizations such as Catholic Charities, Salvation Army and Head Start Programs. Listings of day-care and nursery programs are available through local Offices for Children.

Child Development specialists can provide check-lists for investigating facilities and services. Babysitting arrangements can be made with family members, neighbors and friends. When participants first make contact with

the program this may be their most likely resource. Since a key objective in the program is to successfully juggle parenting and working, it should be noted that these informal relationships do not offer the same support and reliability as do more structured arrangements. Securing and maintaining adequate child care and necessary back-up care is an on-going problem to which staff need to allocate time.

B. How to identify quality parenting skills and vocational planning resources

Staff resources in the specialized areas of parenting and vocational planning are especially needed in the design and implementation of a program. Given the particular needs of this target population "expert" advice and technical assistance can dramatically enhance effectiveness. Program staff can then integrate the perspectives so the participants develop a balanced approach to the realities of being a working parent.

The parenting skills instructor (who could be hired as a consultant) should have:

- technical knowledge of child development stages and other parenting concerns;
- a working knowledge of available community resources and how to use them;
- a philosophy and approach that teaches advocacy skills and encourages self-responsibility;

- a non-judgmental attitude and genuine concern for developing support services that promote independence; and
- a flexibility and openness in helping participants apply "textbook" knowledge of parenting to real day-to-day situations they face.

Quality vocational counselors should possess:

- knowledge of short and long-range career planning, decision-making and job employment strategies;
- familiarity with vocational and employment resources, e.g. printed materials and audio-visual materials; career resource centers; testing and assessment facilities;
- personal background and experience in different work-settings;
- sensitivity to the concerns of parents, especially young parents, many of whom are in a survival/crisis-oriented state; and
- an ability to balance short-range tactics to stabilize employment and finances with longer-term planning and decision-making efforts.

It was our experience that working parents with the above qualifications serve as supportive role models. However, non-parents with the above abilities plus the quality of genuine concern and empathy can also be effective.

D. Strategies for developing training and employment opportunities for young women.

A crucial need exists for developing a variety of training and employment opportunities for young women. Given the economically poor background many of these women may come from, their orientation to work and employment may be one of ambivalence

based on their own insecurity and lack of role models. The problem is further compounded by the fact that women still comprise 80% of the low-paying somewhat dead-end service positions (such as clerk-typists, pink-collar workers, waitresses, etc.)

In order to increase their realistic chances of maintaining employment, and becoming independent, training and employment opportunities that are interesting, challenging, afford opportunity for advancement, and pay well must be developed. At the same time, strategies for job development must include knowledge of local labor market demands.

Resources and strategies for developing training and employment opportunities for women should include:

- technical fields, including data processing, engineering and computer technology, which offer opportunities in manufacturing, repair and sales;
- changing and expanding health-care systems offering opportunities for advancement and incentive for acquiring additional training and skills from a variety of entry-level positions;
- contact with Private Industry Councils, National Alliance of Business, DEC, Work-Education councils and other employment-related agencies providing a source of leads and jobs; and
- contact with women's centers, affirmative action offices, and special employment and training programs for women and minorities to advocate the crucial needs facing young parents seeking employment.

E. Improving Employment Opportunities for Young Parents.

Employer advocacy needs to be an on-going issue from the start of a program. The goal in developing good work/training sites must include educating employers to the particular concerns facing working parents (not just young parents) and the need for increasing flexibility within their systems. Employers are somewhat sensitive to the issues because of the increased numbers of two-career-families.

A strategy for increasing their responsiveness to hiring young parents can stress the following points.

- Young parents tend to be more responsible and motivated than their peers without children.
- While enrolled in this program, services have been designed to encourage regular attendance, a positive work attitude and over-all responsibility.
- Hiring young women in non-traditional areas helps employers meet affirmative action guidelines.
- Part-time and flex-time options provide alternatives to employers faced with economic and production changes.
- The community-at-large benefits when this target population is working rather than welfare dependent.

Initial contact with personnel specialists can be followed up by meetings with immediate supervisors to inform them of special needs and concerns facing participants. The quality of the supervisor/employee relation can be the key factor in a successful

placement rate and in maintaining a quality site. On-going monitoring of the workplace by vocational counselors showing equal concern for employer needs and employee issues serves to educate both.

F. Building and Maintaining Adequate Staff Support

Running a program for young parents faced with emotional problems and the difficulties of juggling parenting and working responsibilities is apt to result in a high degree of stress for staff. The problems participants face are often constant and on-going, and crises, such as illnesses and insufficient funds, need immediate attention. Furthermore, the group based nature of the program can result in a trigger-effect of issues facing more than one participant at a time. The program components are designed to address these issues, and the staff are the "glue" for holding it (and sometimes the participants) together.

The staff needs positive supportive strategies for holding themselves together:

- weekly staff meetings for sharing information and managing cases;
- built-in opportunities informally for unloading feelings, concerns, etc;
- formal staff supervision for processing issues and concerns regarding individuals as well as overall program operation.

- Open, honest evaluations jointly conducted by staff and participants, creating an atmosphere of mutual concern and collaboration ("We're all in this together-let's see how we're doing");
- daily attention to sharing information and providing team support; and
- occasionally, the use of outside consultants to provide objectivity and perspective on how well the program is doing.

The risk of burn-out increases when staff try to assume too much responsibility for helping participants resolve complex and intense problems. a balance must be maintained between dealing with individual concerns and group concerns. Above all, staff need to remember how little has been done in the past, and that the provision of employment related services to young parents is a most valuable and worthwhile endeavor.

CHAPTER VII

POTENTIAL FOR COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES

As demonstrated in this report, the needs of young parents who want to work demand attention to a range of issues not often addressed by CETA programs. This chapter presents the approaches, formats, and resource bases of some programs for young parents with which we are familiar.

One is a comprehensive vocational program for teenage mothers in rural South Carolina which we were fortunate enough to be able to visit. Others are Massachusetts-programs we have contacted for information. This is not an exhaustive list of resources for young parents - there are undoubtedly others. Our intention is to present alternative models as a stimulus to creative program design.

This chapter also presents a summary of potential non-CETA resources for funding services and an overview of the Parent Employment Program's long-range plans for expansion of services.

A. St. Mary's Human Development Center, Ridgeland, South Carolina

St. Mary's is located in the center of the vast lowlands along the southeastern coast of South Carolina. There is virtually no heavy industrial base and the major economic sector other than farming is the tourist/leisure industry around Hilton Head and surrounding islands. St. Mary's client base is predominantly poor and black.

St. Mary's was originally a church retreat/camp. Approximately seven years ago, a day care center was established. The center expanded to include a component for special needs children. It became apparent that increasing numbers of teenage mothers were coming to St. Mary's for child care assistance.

At that time, the program was expanded to include comprehensive social and educational services for pregnant teenagers and teenage mothers. A nutrionist, a nurse, and basic skills teachers were added to the staff.

In 1979, the program was awarded a demonstration grant by the Fund for the Improvement of Post-secondary Education (HEW) to develop a vocational component in conjunction with CETA, leading to both private sector placement and opportunities for continuing post-secondary education.

The program currently serves 110 children and over 60 young mothers on a daily basis. Both mothers and children are provided hot breakfasts and lunches. Many participants need to travel over 30 miles one way to attend, and the program has developed a van/bus transportation route that serves all participants.

The daily schedule includes basic skills classes, skills classes in a variety of occupations (business/office; culinary arts; childcare), parenting skills, nutrition and home economics, and physical education. Mothers eat meals with their children and are close by in case of emergencies. Participants also are placed in limited internship situations after basic skill development to enhance their work readiness. Once a week, the program transports participants to central Welfare offices and other service agencies for Food Stamps and other services. The nurse and mini-clinic on site handle routine medical and health issues and intervene in emergencies.

The camp's facilities are a number of small concrete buildings, a large meeting hall, a newly-built kitchen and dining facility, a swimming pool, and playing fields set on several acres of wooded space. Classrooms; skills training rooms, and offices are spread throughout the camp in a campus-like arrangement. One building has been converted to a temporary shelter for young women and their babies who need emergency housing.

Funding sources for the program include Title XX, the school system, CETA, FIPSE, and USDA.

B. Massachusetts-Based programs

1. Job TIPS
Boston YWCA
140 Clarendon St.
Boston, MA

Sue Howarth 536-7940

This comprehensive vocationally oriented program is funded by a two year Department of Labor grant through the Boston Prime Sponsor. It provides job-training in the trade skills of carpentry, welding, electronics, electrical repair, plumbing, painting and plastering, as well as supportive services for young parents age 16-21.

Comprehensive counseling and educational services provide support for participants managing the difficult tasks of parenting and working. The counseling focus is on motivational and career-related issues: developing good work habits, punctuality, flexibility and a positive work attitude. Courses in parenting skills and life-survival skills are also included.

The program for 20 participants has three phases.

Phase I: (14 weeks) Participants are exposed to all six trade skill areas for basic skill-building,

leading to decision-making.

Phase II: (16 weeks) With counseling assistance, participants select one trade skill area and receive specialized training.

Phase III: (21 weeks) Participants are placed in unsubsidized jobs and participate in on-going support groups focusing on job retention skills and ways to juggle parenting and working concerns.

2. Indaba House
75 Crawford St.
Roxbury, MA 02121

Denile Colman, Director 427-2800

Two separate Programs - the Aware Program and the Kazi Program (meaning work in swahili) - have been designed to serve the needs of teen parents.

The Aware Program is a deliquency diversion program for young women aged 11-17 referred by a variety of community agencies in Roxbury and Dorchester. Services provided include comprehensive counseling (individual and group-based), crisis intervention, workshops and an educational component consisting of tutoring and GED preparation.

A separate Motherhood component is attended by approximately one third of the participants. Special

parenting counseling resource referrals, and child care are available.

The Kazi Program is a pre-vocational program for young mothers aged 16-21, funded jointly for one year by a Department of Public Welfare and Division of Employment Security grant. Young AFDC recipients are selected with a view towards preparing them to succeed in regular employment and training programs. This program provides vocational exploration, parenting, life skills and educational workshops as well as counseling.

3. NUVA
Another Chance
3 Emerson Ave.
Gloucester, MA

Harriet Robbins 283-0000

Another Chance is an electronics training program for teen parents offering extensive parenting and life skills management workshops as supportive services. The electronics training was provided in cooperation with a local employer. Two six-week sessions resulted in an 86% positive placement rate.

Future programming plans are for providing technical training and life management skills. The main target population will be women. Youth with family responsibilities enrolled in the program will continue to be provided with targeted services.

4. The Group School
345 Franklin St.
Cambridge, MA

Neil Smith 661-1525

Group School is an alternative high school which received a special Youthworks grant (March 1980-December 1982) to provide employment and training services to high risk youth.

Since March 1980, 30 teen-age mothers have been enrolled. The full 9 month cycle consists of regular course work, career planning and work experience. Participants attend regular Group School classroom activities and their Allied Health Care Program. Pre-vocational curriculum also includes developing basic skills, job readiness and self-advocacy skills.

Special support discussion groups around the unique concerns facing teen mothers are an integral part of the program. The Group Schools overall philosophy is one of integrating and mainstreaming target populations. Participants are then placed in full-time subsidized jobs in the health field. Many are scheduled to enroll in vocational skills training programs in September, 1980.

Stipends cover the cost of child care. Participants are responsible for setting up their own child care arrangements.

5. Cardinal Cushing Center for the Spanish Speaking
Program for Teen Parents
76 Union Park
Boston, MA

Freida Rodriguez, Program Director 426-7153

This new program is designed to provide a comprehensive coordination and referral system for young Hispanic parents in Boston. Various social, educational, and training agencies throughout Boston will be linked with the center.

6. ACCESS
Family Planning Services
53 Elm St.
Worcester, MA

Francis Anthes, Program Coordinator 756-7123

The goal is for pregnant teenagers to have ready access to a responsive comprehensive, service network. The program will be based at three medical sites (hospitals and clinics). Supportive social services will be delivered on-site. The program is geared toward increasing individuals' access to existing systems through direct work with clients and advocacy to increase agency responsiveness. Networking agencies have also participated in training provided by ACCESS on the needs of pregnant

teens.

Specific services include:

- family planning information;
- legal and financial information;
- personal and family therapy;
- parenting and life skills;
- health and nutritional information; and
- educational/vocational referral.

Health care and supplemental services are provided through trans-disciplinary teams consisting of a physician, nurse practitioner, nurse, social worker and therapist.

The one-to-one relationship between the pregnant teenager and her social worker or nurse advocate is seen as a key factor in client success. Ongoing advocacy and a three-year follow-up plan will emphasize continued medical care for the mother and child, educational programs, and the identification of high risk situations demanding active intervention.

7. School Age Mothers
125 Providence St.
Worcester, MA

Carol Epstein 753-0966

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This program is a collaborative effort of the

Worcester Public Schools, Worcester Children's Friends Society, and the Girls Club.

The program is designed to encourage pregnant teenagers to finish school. Special classes are held at the Girls Club from 8:30 to 2:30. Sessions in health and nutrition, life skills, and parenting skills are conducted individually or in small groups. An Infant Day Care service is provided for program participants. Mothers can attend the school for one term after delivery, and then are expected to return to school. Limited follow-up services are available.

The program staff includes a Program Director, teachers from the Worcester Public Schools, a social worker, a nurse, and a day-care coordinator.

8. Crittention Hastings House
10 Perthshire Road
Brighton, MA 02135

Mrs. Montague 782-7600

This comprehensive agency offers outpatient clinical services including family planning information and counseling, a residential and a day program for young mothers, and an educational outreach component.

The residential and day programs serve primarily teen mothers and provide a full range of counseling services dealing with decision-making, parenting and family-life skills.

9. Bridge Over Troubled Water
Homefront Program
23 Beacon St.
Boston, MA

Barbara Whalen 227-7114

Bridge provides supportive services for young parents, including ESL tutoring through Youth participation and SETC grants. There is a nurse on staff at the program to handle medical issues. A major feature of the program are "kitchen-table" rap sessions which cover career awareness, parenting, nutrition, life management, and other areas of concern to young parents. Some participants are enrolled in or referred to Boston Prime Sponsor programs.

C. Recommended Resources to Consider

Many programs for young parents may want to consider multiple funding and service strategies to complement available local CETA resources. As interest in the barriers facing teen parents increases, more and more established and new government agencies are targeting resources to this population.

The following recommendations for funding and resources research are presented as suggestions only. At this time, we do not have specific current information on funds and programs available.

1. Title XX (State): Administered by the Department of Social Services, Title XX is the single largest resource for broad-based social services, including child care, services for unwed mothers, emergency shelter, fostercare, abuse/neglect prevention and intervention, and so forth.

2. Department of Mental Health (DMH) (State): Funds programs primarily focussed on clinical issues.

3. Department of Youth Services (DYS) (State): Resources for court-referred and de-institutionalized youth.

4. Massachusetts Committee on Criminal Justice (State): Resources for diversion, offender and ex-offender programs.

5. Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (State): Programs for handicapped individuals; "handicap" is usually fairly broadly defined.

6. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) (Federal): Resources for housing and community development.

7. Department of Health and Social Services (old HEW) (Federal): Demonstration and seed programs for adolescent mothers, with a heavy emphasis on medical/social services.

8. Department of Public Health (State): Programs concerned with mother and infant care.

9. Department of Agriculture (Federal): Hot meals programs and programs on nutrition.

10. WIN Program (Federal): The National WIN office has recently funded employment programs for young mothers.

11. Chapter 766 (State): Through local school systems, state and Federal money is targeted for youth with special needs up to the age of 21 without a high school diploma. Funds some alternative education programs.

12. Vocational Education (State): Federal funds managed by the State Department of Education, channelled through school systems for vocational educational programs. Includes targeted resources for special and disadvantaged populations.

D. Long-range plans for PEP

Our experience with the Parent Employment Program this year has shown us that a vocational-employment program for young parents meets a crucial need for this population. However, this is but one need. While the program has been designed for maximum flexibility to deal with the other needs of the participants, we are constantly reminded of other services necessary for young parents.

735, Inc, via PEP, has applied to the Mass. Dept. of Social Services, for funding to provide supportive services for young parents. These would include, individual and group counseling, life skills workshops (i.e. nutrition, childcare, etc.) medical advocacy, home visits by a staff nurse, and so forth. These services would be for pre- and post-natal adolescents who are not ready to handle the full-time commitment necessary in an employment program.

Affordable, quality day care is a must for young parents who are exploring and/or planning careers. PEP will be investigating the feasibility of either starting a day care service ourselves or linking up with existing services that would give a priority status to young parents involved with PEP.

Housing is another crucial need for this population. As is generally known, public and subsidized housing

have long waiting lists. Many of the young parents we have worked with this year are continuing to live with their parents under less than ideal conditions and cannot afford to move out. We see a need for "congregate-type" housing during a transition period for young parents.

Another need is for continuing support after participants leave the program. We do keep in touch with former participants and they tend to stay in contact with us. We also have designed a follow-up process into the program model. Often times this is not enough.

Two of our former participants are currently working on setting up a community network-type of support for young parents. This would involve meeting at other young parents homes, sharing resources and information, as well as helping each other with informal services, (babysitting, transportation, etc.).

Much advocacy needs to be done with employers, institutions of higher education, and even the medical field about flexible hours and day care needs of parents with young children.

Our long-range plans involve both planning and resource development to build adequate responses to these needs we've identified into a more comprehensive delivery system resulting in sustained, productive employment.

APPENDIX A

JOB DESCRIPTION

DIRECTOR

General Responsibilities

To provide overall coordination and direction for the 735 Parent Employment Program to encompass but not be limited to: staff development and training, staff supervision care management, contract and program administration and management. S/he will be responsible to the Director of Employment and Training Services of 735, Inc.

Specific Duties

1. Preparation of proposals, budgets, budget revisions and contracts for 735 Parent Employment Program.

2. Serves as a liason between the CETA Subgrantee and agency administration in contract negotiations and policy implementation.

3. Provides technical assistance, supervision and training to program staff.

4. Development and implementation of general client services to be provided by program staff.

5. Provide case management for program staff - coordinate and monitor all vocational and assessment counseling activities in the program.

6. Maintenance of coordination with other community agencies in effecting the quality and delivery of program services.

7. Provide individual and group counseling sessions with participants on an as needed basis.

8. Schedule and facilitate weekly staff and supervision meetings.

9. Act as liason between participants, work supervisors, job development, program staff and 735 Youth Employment Program.

10. Maintain all records and other materials that are deemed necessary for proper program administration.

11. Attend program and agency meetings regularly.

Percentage of Time in Various Program Activities

1.	Administration	60%
2.	Services	40%
3.	Training	0%

JOB DESCRIPTION

VOCATIONAL COUNSELOR/SERVICES COORDINATOR

General Responsibilities

To assist program participants with vocational assessment, employability planning and personal and vocational counseling. S/he will also coordinate participant activities with regards to job placement, educational and supportive services provision. Provide for administrative coordination of participant records and files.

Specific Duties

1. Provide program participants with vocational assessment, planning and counseling services.
2. Will be involved in participant placement into Work Experience employment, OJT and IR in coordination with 735 Youth Employment Program job development staff.
3. Develop and maintain resource file of appropriate services needed by program participants (young parents).
4. Provide advocacy and referral for participants as necessary for successful program completion.
5. Responsible for maintaining participant counseling progress report.
6. Coordinate with training staff of 735 Y.E.P. the development and implementation of participant education plan.
7. Responsible for accuracy of participant time sheets.
8. Maintain all records and other materials that are deemed necessary for proper program operation.
9. Provide participants with career information and program support for exploring non-traditional careers.
10. Interface with the program director on the coordination of counseling activities and internal record keeping.

11. Responsible for the proper flow of information regarding potential and active participants between the program and the Youth Coordinator's Office - Medford CETA.

12. Attend necessary program and agency meetings regularly.

Percentage of Time in Various Program Activities

1.	Administration	0%
2.	Services	60%
3.	Training	40%

JOB DESCRIPTION

VOCATIONAL COUNSELOR/WORKSHOP AND GROUP COORDINATOR

General Responsibilities

To assist program participants with vocational assessment, employability planning and personal and vocational counseling. Will also coordinate participant activities with regards to job placement, educational and supportive services provision. Be responsible for developing participant workshop activities.

Specific Duties

1. Provide program participants with vocational assessment, planning and counseling services
2. Will be involved in participant placement into Work Experience employment, OJT and IR in coordination with 735 Youth Employment Program job development staff.
3. Provide advocacy and referral for participants as necessary for successful program completion.
4. Responsible for maintaining participant counseling progress reports.
5. Coordinate with training staff of 735 Youth Employment Program the development and implementation of participant education plan.
6. Responsible for accuracy of participant time sheets.
7. Maintain all records and other materials deemed necessary for proper program operations.
8. provide participants with career information and program support for exploring non-traditional careers.
9. Develop and facilitate career and personal support workshops for participants.
10. Coordinate the development and implementation of parenting and basic life skills workshops for participants.
11. Attend necessary program and agency meetings regularly.

Percentage of Time in Various Program Activities

1.	Administration	0%
2.	Services	40%
3.	Training	60%

JOB DESCRIPTION

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION INSTRUCTOR

General Responsibilities

Implementation of educational services to program participants individually and in groups through tutoring, completion of secondary education either by attendance at night school and/or G.E.D. preparation and vocationally oriented seminars or workshops.

Specific Duties

1. Assess individual participants educational and training needs in conjunction with vocational counselors and job developers.
2. Provide individual and group instruction to participants in accordance with their educational needs.
3. Record individual progress through testing and the writing of progress notes. Monitor progress in the G.E.D. exam.
4. Assist participants in referral to appropriate educational/vocational resources.
5. Develop educational material.
6. Participate in staff and team meetings.

Percentage of Time Spent in Various Program Activities

1.	Administration	0%
2.	Services	30%
3.	Training	70%

APPENDIX B

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